

IMPERFECTIONS OF SENSATIONS

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other point of view it appears to be more ^{or} less oval. We judge it to be circular, not from its actual appearance but from our memory of previous similar impressions of it, coupled with experiences of touch : we infer that it is circular, although to our sensation it may appear oval. So also with colours, the actual appearance of which varies very greatly according to the amount of light that falls upon them and the direction from which it falls. Our real guide is not sensation, but perception, which is sensation adjusted in the light of previous experiences. Not only then is the brain, as we have seen, the origin of sensation, but it needs processes of the brain to render sensory impressions useful to us. Practice enables us to adjust with instantaneous rapidity. But babies that reach for a bright object, regardless of its distance, prove that the faculty of adjustment rests upon experience. Having made these adjustments habitually, we can hardly disentangle ourselves of their guidance. It is quite difficult to draw things, not as we infer them to be, but as they actually appear: children's pictures. primitive art and oriental art all aim at truth by representing not the seen but the inferred. It requires, indeed, an artist to set down the simple impressions of the eyes. These are in perspective, and those who look at the pictures are convinced of solidity by their own powers of

inference.

Our sensorv impressions need. then to be adiusted before they will guide us trustworthilv. and we correct each one of them as it comes. bv investing it with attributes. such as roundness or solidity. which it does not appear to possess. but which we infer from the memory of previous impressions and tactile experiences that it does possess. In other words. the key to our impressions is a stock of memories and ability to infer